

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-05 IO-10 NIC-01 SAJ-01 NEA-09 SAM-01 OMB-01 /090 W

----- 041253

R 251555Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7568

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, CH, UR, JA

SUBJ: SOVIET MEDIA ON CHINA: BORDER TALKS, NPC,

GULLIBLE JOURNALISTS

REF: A. MOSCOW 2140; B. MOSCOW 1642

1. SUMMARY: IN A MAJOR COMMENTARY APPARENTLY PEGGED TO
THE RESUMPTION OF THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER TALKS, MOSCOW SAYS
THAT PROGRESS IN SETTling THE QUESTION IS UP TO PEKING.
THE COMMENTARY CATALOGUES MOSCOW'S COMPLAINTS AGAINST PEKING'S
FOREIGN POLICY, IN PARTICULAR ITS ALLEGED SUPPORT FOR ANTI-
SOVIET FORCES. ON THE IDEOLOGICAL FRONT THE ARTICLE
DENOUNCES MAOISM AS AN ACCOMPLICE TO "ANTICOMMUNISM" AND CALLS FOR
CONTINUED

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STRUGGLE AGAINST IT. ON BILATERAL QUESTIONS, IT

REITERATES BREZHNEV'S ULAN BATOR SPEECH ON NOVEMBER 26 AND SHOWS NO HINT OF ANY NEW SOVIET INITIATIVE TOWARDS ACCOMMODATION. IN THREE OTHER RECENT COMMENTARIES, THE SOVIETS HAVE DISCUSSED MAO AND THE SUCCESSION, HAVE LINKED NEGATIVE THEMES ON POST-NPC CHINA AND HAVE DECOUNCED GULLIBLE JOURNALISTS, ESPECIALLY IN JAPAN, WHO REPLAY PEKING'S PROPAGANDA UNCRITICALLY. END SUMMARY.

2. PRAVDA (FEBRUARY 22) CARRIED A MAJOR UNSIGNED COMMENTARY ON CHINA CALLED "IN CONFLICT WITH THE BASIC INTERESTS OF PEOPLES." THE COMMENTARY COVERED MOSCOW'S COMMITMENT TO WORLD PEACE, PEKING'S WAR PSYCHOSIS, THE MAOISTS' COLLUSION WITH REACTIONARIES IN SUPPORTING "AGGRESSIVE BLOCs" LIKE NATO, CENTO, AND SEATO, AND THEIR EFFORTS TO DAMAGE SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS. THE ARTICLE ALSO CLAIMED THAT PEKING HAD ORGANIZED A BIG WELCOME FOR A POLISH EMIGRE LEADER WHO SOUGHT TO REOPEN THE QUESTION OF THE POST-WORLD II POLISH-GERMAN BORDER.

3. THE ARTICLE DENOUNCES PEKING'S VIEW OF "THREE WORLDS," IN WHICH THE TWO "SUPERPOWERS" ALLEGEDLY SEEK WORLD DOMINATION. PEKING DISAPPROVES SOVIET-U.S. DETENTE, SAYS PRAVDA, AND SEEKS TO PUSH THE TWO TOWARDS THERMONUCLEAR WAR. THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO CHARGE THE CHINESE WITH BIG-POWER CHAUVINISM IN ALLEGEDLY INTERFERING IN THE AFFAIRS OF THEIR SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN NEIGHBORS, AND FOR ALLEGEDLY NOT OPPOSING THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THOSE AREAS. ON THE MIDDLE EAST, PRAVDA CHARGES THAT PEKING'S POLICY ENCOURAGES ZIONIST MILITARISTS AND THEIR "IMPERIALIST SUPPORTERS."

4. TURNING THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN POINT AROUND, PRAVDA GOES ON TO CHARGE PEKING WITH SELLING OUT THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, THAILAND AND THE PHILIPPINES. THE ARTICLE CHARGES FURTHER THAT PEKING CARRIES ON "SPLITTIST ACTIVITIES" AND THAT ITS POLICIES ARE A DANGER TO THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT AND SERVE AS AN ACCOMPLICE TO ANTICOMMUNISM. LEST THE OPERATIONAL POINT BE MISSED

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BY THOSE MOSCOW HOPES TO ENLIST INCOMING COMMUNIST CONFERENCES, PRAVDA SAYS THAT THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE IDEOLOGY AND POLICIES OF MAOISM REMAINS ONE OF THE CHIEF TASKS IN SUPPORT OF SOCIALISM, FREEDOM, INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY OF PEOPLES.

5. ON BILATERAL QUESTIONS, THE ARTICLE STATES THAT THE SOVIETS HAD NEVER DONE ANYTHING AGAINST THE INTERESTS

OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE AND HAD HELPED THEM GENEROUSLY. ON THE BORDER ISSUE, IT SAYS THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE REPEATEDLY TABLED PROPOSALS TO SETTLE IT; MOSCOW HAS NO TERRITORIAL CLAIMS AGAINST THE PRC; SUCH QUESTIONS ARISE ONLY FROM THE CHINESE SIDE. THE MAOISTS' REFERENCES TO "TERRITORIAL QUESTIONS," SAYS PRAVDA, SERVE TO HEIGHTEN CHAUVINISTIC HYSTERIA IN CHINA AND TO POISON THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE OF THE WORLD. THE ARTICLE REPEATS THE PORTION OF BREZHNEV'S ULAN BATOR SPEECH WHICH IN EFFECT DENIES THE EXISTENCE OF "DISPUTED TERRITORIES." IT THEN CITES CHO EN-LAI'S SPEECH TO THE NPC, SAYING THAT THE PRC LEADERS COULD MAKE SOME GENUINELY CONSTRUCTIVE STEP IF THEY SERIOUSLY WISHED TO MOVE TOWARDS NORMALIZATION.

6. ALTHOUGH IL'ICHEV'S RETURN TO PEKING IS NOT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED, THE TIMING AND CONTENTS OF THE ARTICLE SEEM OBVIOUSLY DIRECTED AT THE RESUMED BORDER TALKS. THE CALL FOR THE PRC LEADERS TO DO SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE SOUNDS LIKE AN ECHO OF CHOU'S CALL AT THE NPC FOR THE SOVIETS TO DO SOMETHING TO SOLVE "A BIT" OF THE PROBLEM. IT MAY BE MORE THAN AN ECHO-- WE WOULD NOT RULE OUT A GENUINE HOPE ON THE SOVIET SIDE THAT THE CHINESE MAY MAKE SOME MOVE TO CHARGE OR RELEASE THE HELICOPTER CREW CAPTURED NEARLY A YEAR AGO. BUT ON THE BORDER ITSELF AND ON THE BROAD RANGE OF ISSUES SEPARATING THE TWO SIDES WE SEE NO HINT HERE THAT THE GULF HAS BEEN NARROWED. IF ANYTHING, MOSCOW'S DRIVE TO OSTRACIZE PEKING FROM THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT MAY BE INTENSIFYING AS THE TIME FOR THE EUROPEAN COMMUNIST CONFERENCE IN PREPARATION FOR A WORLD CONFERENCE, DRAWS CLOSER.

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7. PRC POLITICAL COUNSELOR WANG TOLD EMBOFF ON FEBRUARY 24 THAT HE SAW NOTHING NEW IN THE ARTICLE AND THAT HE DID NOT THINK IT WAS RELATED TO ILICHEV'S RETURN TO PEKING.

8. IZVESTIYA COMMENTATOR ALEKSANDR BOVIN, WRITING IN THE PAPER'S WEEKLY SUPPLEMENT OF FEBRUARY 16, DISCUSSED MAO TSE-TUNG'S LEADERSHIP OF THE PRC AND THE QUESTION WHICH HIS PASSING WILL RAISE. HE DISPUTES THAT NOTION THAT MAO HAS CEASED TO PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE AND COUNTERS THAT MAO WILL CONTINUE TO INFLUENCE THOSE THINGS THAT HE CARES MOST ABOUT. QUOTING FROM MAO'S "TIGER-MONKEY" LETTER TO HIS WIFE IN 1966, BOVIN SAYS THAT MAO IS INDEED A CONTRADICTIONARY FIGURE AND CITES THE FATES OF PENG TE-HUAI AND LIN PIAO AS EVIDENCE OF MAO'S MANIPULATION

OF PEOPLE. INTERESTINGLY, BOVIN WONDERS ALOUD WHAT ROLE
CHOU EN-LAI PLAYED IN THE LIN AFFAIR. IN ANY CASE, THE
INTRIGUES OF THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER GO ON, SAYS BOVIN.
WHAT OF THE FUTURE? TWO CONTRADICTORY FACTORS WILL
BE A WORK, SAYS BOVIN, MAO'S WAY, WITH ITS GREAT
PSYCHOLOGICAL INERTIA AND NATIONALISTIC INSTINCTS, AND
THE STABILIZING WAY OF THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT INSTI-
TUTIONS WHICH WANT TO END POLITICAL DISRUPTIONS. CHINA'S
TRUE NATIONAL INTERESTS, BOVIN SAYS, CANNOT BE SERVED
BY RADICAL POLICIES, AND HE CONCLUDES THAT THE LAWS OF

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HISTORY PERMIT ONE TO BE OPTIMISTIC. BOVIN'S PIECE,
WHILE TYPICALLY NEGATIVE ABOUT MAO, IS THE MOST
BALANCED WE HAVE NOTED FROM SOVIET COMMENTATORS ON THE

SUCCESSION QUESTION.

9. IN ANOTHER RECENT COMMENTARY, IZVESTIYA (FEBRUARY 19) CARRIED AN ARTICLE BY L. GUDOSHNIKOV JOINING THREE THEMES ON POST-NPC CHINA WHICH HAD BEEN TREATED SEPARATELY IN EARLIER SOVIET COMMENTS. THE FIRST IS THE NEW CONSTITUTION, WHICH IS COMPARED UNFAVORABLY WITH ITS 1954 PREDECESSOR IN TERMS SIMILAR TO THE ALEKSANDROV ARTICLE IN PARVDA OF FEBRUARY 5 (MOSCOW 1642). GUDOSHNIKOV ALSO EXPANDS ON THE THEME OF THE ALLEGED INCREASE IN MAO'S PERSONAL POWER, WHICH WAS NOTED IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A TASS ITEM OF FEBRUARY 9 ON THE NEW MILITARY STRUCTURE. AND THIRDLY, HE LINKS MAOIST IDEOLOGY TO THE THEORIES OF TROTSKY, A THEME WHICH WAS TREATED AT GRATED LENGTH IN NW TIMES OF FEBRUARY 14 (MOSCOW 2140, PARA 3). LIKE THE EARLIER PIECES, THE IZVESTIYA ITEM AGAIN FOCUSES ON PEKING'S IDEOLOGICAL DEVIATION, WITH MAO AND MAOISM ROASTED AS USUAL, BUT IT CONTINUES TO AVOID DIRECT DENUNCIATION OF PREMIER CHOU, VICE PREMIER TENY OR OTHER MEMBERS OF THE NEW PRC GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP.

10. IN LITERATURNAYA GAZETA (FEBRUARY 19), B. KRYMOV TAKES AIM AT CHINESE PROPAGANDA AND ITS AFFECT ON THE UNIFORMED. THE ARTICLE BEGINS, MOST CURIOUSLY, WITH A CITATION OF A ZURICH NEWSPAPER'S ALLEGATION ON THE "LACK OF QUALIFICATIONS OF SOVIET SINOLOGISTS." THE SWISS PAPER, SAYS LIT GAZ, POINTS TO MOSCOW'S BELIEF IN PERMANENT STRUGGLE IN PEKING, AND CONCLUDES THAT "MOSCOW IS NOT ADEQUATELY INFORMED ABOUT INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA." WITHOUT ANSWERING THESE CHARGES, LT GAZ DENOUNCES GULLIBLE JOURNALISTS, ESPECIALLY JAPANESE, WHO ACCEPT PEKING'S PROPAGANDA. THE ARTICLE NOTES THAT IN RECENT YEARS JAPANESE JOURNALISTS IN PEKING HAVE BECOME MERE MOUTHPIECES FOR THE PRC. VISITS AND INTERVIEWS WITH PRC LEADERS OFTEN PRODUCE PROMINENT ANTI-SOVIET COMMENTS IN THE JAPANESE PRESS, SAYS LIT GAZ, WHICH CONSTITUTES INTERFERENCE IN JAPAN'S EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. BY THIS MEANS, SAYS THE ARTICLE, PEKING SEEKS TO SUPPORT A BLOC WHICH WANTS TO REEXAMINE THE RESULTS OF WORLD WAR II. KRYMOV CONCLUDES IN AN APPARENT NON-SEQUITUR THAT PRO-PEKING PROPAGANDA IN JAPAN SHOWS THE ANTI-SOVIET NATURE OF THE PROPOSED SINO-JAPANESE TREATY. IN OUR VIEW THE ARTICLE IS MOST INTERESTING FOR ITS ADMISION THAT SOME OUTSIDERS DO NOT AGREE WITH MOSCOW'S VIEW ON CHINA. AND BY LINKING THE COMPLAINT OF GULLIBILITY DIRECTLY TO THE JAPANESE, THE ARTICLE TAKES ANOTHER SLAP AT TOKYO FOR ITS WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT A TREATY WITH PEKING.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, SINO SOVIET DISPUTES, BORDER INCIDENTS, COMMUNIST DOCTRINE, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW02587
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750066-0651
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750215/aaaaanex.tel
Line Count: 278
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 MOSCOW 2140, 75 MOSCOW 1642
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 MAY 2003 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET MEDIA ON CHINA: BORDER TALKS, NPC, GULLIBLE JOURNALISTS
TAGS: PFOR, CH, UR, JA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006